
Regional Council Activity Report

July 28, 2000

Briefing to Member Agencies from Executive Director James M. Bourey



Executive Director's Report

For many years, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) has developed a 20-year transportation plan known as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). This plan is updated each year, always projecting to the 20-year horizon. As a point of reference, the current LRTP includes \$38 billion of transportation improvements.

With the scheduled completion of the Regional Freeway System in 2007, a new Regional Transportation Plan is needed to guide the continued development of the region's transportation system. The new plan will be based on newly defined goals, objectives and strategies for the future that will incorporate anticipated changes in regional development and trends in transportation, and provide the context for all transportation improvements in the region.

The work to develop the MAG Regional Transportation Plan will parallel the development of the State Transportation Plan that is currently underway. The MAG plan will be an important component of the State Transportation Plan. At its meeting July 26, the MAG Regional Council took the first step by approving a recommendation for issuing a Request for Proposals for consultant support for the development of the new plan.

There will be a number of key partners in the development of the new plan, including MAG member agencies, the Arizona Department of Transportation, the Regional Public Transportation Authority, the public and transportation stakeholders.

The Regional Transportation Plan will be developed in two phases. Phase I is focused on the development of a solid policy foundation for future transportation infrastructure decisions. This phase will also be used to examine the future trends, technological developments, and other factors that could influence transportation demand and how services are provided. Phase I will also seek to develop transportation values, goals and objectives — including a compilation of the goals and visions of each of the MAG member agencies. This first phase will conclude with the development of performance measures that can be used to test transportation strategies. Phase II will then be used to identify future transportation facilities.

I am looking forward with great anticipation to the development of this new Regional Transportation Plan. This process represents a remarkable opportunity for MAG communities to define our transportation future. By sharing our vision and resources, the best plan for the future will emerge, ensuring that our transportation investments will enable this region to prosper in the new economy.



Regional Council Meeting Report for July 26, 2000

Council Approves Major Transportation Plans

The MAG Regional Council has approved three major plans which will drive transportation projects and improvements in the region for both the short and long term. The FY 2001-2005 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Long Range Transportation Plan Summary and 2000 Update, and the 2000 Conformity Analysis were all approved during the July 26 meeting. Among the projects included in the five-year TIP are fixed guideway corridors for the light rail starter network, additional HOV lanes on US 60 from I-10 to Val Vista Drive, additional general purpose lanes on US 60 from Price Freeway to Val Vista drive, and Grand Avenue improvements.

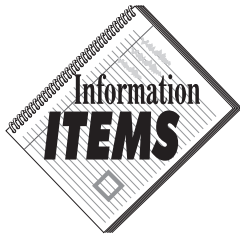
For more information contact Paul Ward, MAG Transportation Programming Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Public Input Report Accepted

Comments received by citizens during the final phase of the MAG Public Involvement Process were accepted by the MAG Regional Council as part of the MAG FY 2000 Final Phase Input Opportunity Report. Citizens had an opportunity to tell decision makers what they think about regional and state transportation plans during an open house and public hearing June 26, as well as to provide written comments through the end of the comment period on July 10, 2000.

The comments obtained at the open house and public hearing addressed several topics, including air quality, safety, light rail, travel trends, dust pollution and other specific suggestions. Written comments addressed street signage, metric mile markers, Scottsdale bus service, and a variety of comments on specific freeway and road projects.

For more information contact Kelly Taft, MAG Communications Manager, (602) 254-6300.



Information Items

West Valley Corridor Plan Picks Up Steam

The first phase of the West Valley Multi-Modal Transportation Corridor Plan is nearly complete. The purpose of the plan, which is being funded through a state Transportation Enhancement Funds Grant, is to develop a non-motorized trail system for a 42-mile corridor along the New River and the Lower Agua Fria River. The project is being integrated with the Agua Fria Watercourse Master Plan, which is funded by the Flood Control District of Maricopa County. Staff from participating jurisdictions for both projects serve on an Agency Oversight Team to guide project development. Phase I of the MAG project involved data collection and analysis. The next phase of the MAG project will include developing draft alternative corridor concepts and the analysis of potential routes. Input on the concepts will be obtained from the Agency Oversight Team, a Design Workshop in early October, and from the public in December, 2000. A draft plan is expected in the spring of 2001.

For more information contact Dawn Coomer, MAG Transportation Planner, (602) 254-6300.



Upcoming Issues

MAG Urges Agencies to Back Domestic Violence Initiatives

The MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council has begun implementing recommendations contained in the 1999 Regional Plan on Domestic Violence by focusing on three key initiatives. The first initiative centers on workplace policies and practices to address domestic violence. The Council will lead an effort to assist local governments in developing policies and practices to address issues of domestic violence in the workplace.

The second initiative will be to establish local coordinating councils within cities to strengthen the links between police, fire, prosecutors, social services and courts, and to push for more appropriate sentencing for abusers. The third initiative focuses on the development of crisis response teams to deal with the medical and social service needs of victims and their children at the scene of an incident.

MAG will be encouraging member agencies to participate in these initiatives and to work with the Regional Domestic Violence Council in implementing the recommendations. The Council represents one of the largest domestic violence coordination efforts in the country.

For more information contact Mary Thomson, MAG Domestic Violence Specialist, (602) 254-6300.



Upcoming Events

Public Meetings Scheduled on CANAMEX Corridor

Three public meetings have been scheduled to enable citizens of the West Valley to comment on a preliminary recommendation for the routing of the CANAMEX Corridor through the Maricopa region. Starting from the junction of I-8 and I-10 and proceeding westward and northward, the recommended route includes: I-8, SR 85, I-10, the Sun Valley Parkway (extended north to US 60), a bypass of Wickenburg, and US 93. The public meetings will be held from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at the dates and locations below:

- August 31 — Sun City West Foundation Community Services Center, 14465 R.H. Johnson Blvd., Sun City West
- September 5 — Buckeye Community Center, 201 Centre, Buckeye
- September 7 — Wickenburg Community Center, 120 N. Valentine, Wickenburg

A stakeholders forum was held July 24 at the MAG offices to receive input from stakeholders. The CANAMEX Corridor, which will run from Canada to Mexico, has been identified in federal legislation as a high priority corridor. The recommendation from this project is expected to become the specified route in federal legislation for the Maricopa region.

For more information contact Chris Voigt, MAG Senior Engineer, (602) 254-6300.

Regional Stakeholders Meeting Planned

A Regional Stakeholders meeting to identify needs and issues for upcoming regional transportation plans will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 1, 2000 at the MAG Offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 200. The meeting marks the beginning of the Early Phase Input Opportunity, and gives transportation and agency stakeholders an opportunity to provide comments and ideas on the FY 2002-2006 Transportation Improvement Program and the Long Range Transportation Plan. Stakeholders will include representatives from MAG, the Arizona Department of Transportation, and the Regional Public Transportation Authority.

For more information contact Jason Stephens, MAG Planner, (602) 254-6300.

Next Regional Council Meeting

There will be no Regional Council meeting in August. The next Regional Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 4, 2000 at 5:00 p.m. at the MAG offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 200. Agenda items are pending.

For more information contact Dennis Smith, MAG Assistant Director, (602) 254-6300.